



**You're Just
Like A Pill
(Designed To
Kill)**

Drindalis

You're Just Like A Pill (Designed To Kill) by Drindalis

Category: IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

Genre: Bill/Stans if you squint, First Crush, Friends to Lovers, Homophobic Language, M/M, Period-Typical Homophobia, Reddie because let's be honest that's what most of us are here for, except they're literally 13 so it's just affection disguised by verbal abuse, the amount of tags are too damn high

Language: English

Characters: Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Henry Bowers, Henry Bowers's Gang (IT), Mike Hanlon, Pennywise (IT), Reginald "Belch" Huggins, Richie Tozier, Sonia Kaspbrak, Stan's Parents, Stanley Uris, Victor Criss

Relationships: Bill Denbrough/St Stanley Uris (implied), Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier

Status: Completed

Published: 2017-11-02

Updated: 2017-11-02

Packaged: 2020-02-01 00:03:44

Rating: Teen And Up Audiences

Warnings: No Archive Warnings Apply

Chapters: 1

Words: 5,571

Publisher: archiveofourown.org

Summary:

It's been three days since the Loser's Club defeated Pennywise, and Richie and Eddie have plans to meet up at the pharmacy at noon.

It's been three hours, and Eddie still hasn't shown up. Shortly after that, Richie finds Eddie's bike run over in an alleyway with a homophobic slur carved into the side.

It's been three minutes and Richie is understandably freaking out for his best friend in a totally platonic and completely straight way. (Spoiler alert: straight as a perfect circle!)

You're Just Like A Pill (Designed To Kill)

Author's Note:

Hello and welcome to 'I Am A Piece Of Shit: The FanFic'. Please take your complementary baseball bat and feel free to bludgeon me in the shins for what I'm about to write. ;) Thankssss

Warning for some period typical homophobic slurs!

Stan didn't think anything of it at first. The phone rang next to his bed, and he diverted his attention from the movie he was watching to scoop it up, tilting his head sideways to hold it as he clicked the volume button to turn the TV down.

"Hello?"

"Stanley, dear?"

He resisted the urge to curse as he realized who it was. Sonia Kaspbrak, Eddie's overbearing and smothering mother. "Yeah, this is he. What can I help you with, Mrs. Kaspbrak?" He asked politely. Stan honestly couldn't care less for Eddie's mom, as she was openly hostile and rude to every member of the Loser's Club barring himself and sometimes Bill, depending on the day. Sometimes when he stuttered in front of her she turned up her nose like it might be catching. Not to mention the way she treated Eddie, like he was a delicate and fragile piece of glass that needed protection at all times.

Stan had overheard his mother discussing it with his dad once after they thought he had gone to bed.

"It's not healthy for a boy Eddie's age to be so afraid of getting hurt. Richie is always running around with scraped knees and a smile, and even Billy will wrestle with the other boys sometimes. I just worry about Eddie getting left out of their fun because of what Sonia will say about it..."

Stan's dad had nodded in understanding but had spoken proudly. *"Stanley won't let anything bad happen to him. He's always good about*

reigning the others in when they get too rowdy. He'll make sure Eddie doesn't get forgotten about. Plus with Ben and Mike being so calm, and a girl in their group now, I think Eddie will do just fine. I'm glad Stan's made such a fine group of friends."

Stan had gone to bed that night glowing with pride.

Back in the present, Sonia tittered in the background. *"Is Eddie over at your house, Stanley? He left on that death trap of a bicycle earlier this morning and didn't leave a note-!"* She sounded sick with worry, her sugary sweet voice so over the top it made Stan want to puke. He frowned and glanced at the clock. It was a quarter to three in the afternoon.

It was an unspoken agreement between the four original Losers that if Sonia asked, Eddie was at Stan's house. It was the only place she didn't complain about or insist was a bad influence on her precious baby boy, probably due to the fact that Stan was always impeccably polite to his elders and washed his hands almost as often as Eddie did.

"O-oh, man, I didn't remember to call, right Eddie? Geez, I thought you said you told your mom." He pulled the phone away as if speaking to the hypochondriac, and muffled the phone mouthpiece as he replied to himself in a smaller and more high pitched voice. "Oh, crap, I totally forgot!" He then put the phone back to his ear and spoke again. "Eddie said he's sorry he forgot to tell you he was spending the night at my house tonight. We were working on some summer homework and lost track of time."

By the relief in her voice she had bought it. *"Oh, thank goodness, I was about ready to call the police! Make sure he remembers to brush his teeth and be in bed by nine! No later, he needs his rest!"* She scolded lightly and Stan nodded on instinct.

"Yes, ma'am, I'll make sure he does!"

"You're a good boy, Stanley. Good night." She said, hanging up, and Stan faked a gag as he hung up as well. Eddie probably went to Richie's or Bill's house and forgot to let his mom know. After the argument where he threw his pills away and rushed to Neibolt Street,

Sonia had reluctantly begun to loosen the reigns on Eddie, although not by much. He flicked the volume back up on the TV and debated checking with Richie to make sure he was at the Tozier's, but soon his attention was fully back on his nature show and he didn't worry about it. The clown was gone, dead in the cistern, what else was there to worry about?

Richie huffed to himself as he mashed buttons on the arcade game of today, Street Fighter, happy that the sound of some whiny kid screaming at the top of his lungs from near the arcade entrance earlier had finally stopped. Probably lost his game and was being a sore loser about it. Ryu unleashed an epic move and Richie cackled as his victory was announced, fumbling for another quarter to continue his reign of terror. An empty pocket greeted him and he groaned, scowling as he pulled his pocket inside out as if expecting more quarters to suddenly appear. "Fuck, I'm tapped out already? Damn it, five bucks doesn't last as long as it used to.." The scrawny, glasses clad boy leaned back and looked around, possibly for someone he could con a couple quarters off of, before spotting the clock. "Three already? Damn, Eddie, your mom must be doing a full cavity search on you today." Eddie was supposed to meet up with him at the pharmacy at noon, but Richie had shown up a little early, gotten bored waiting, and wandered into the arcade across the street. Three hours had flown by like it was nothing, and still no sign of the smaller boy.

Richie frowned, tucking his hands in the pockets of his baggy jeans and leaned against a Dragon's Lair machine, glancing over at the pharmacy with something like concern on his features. Maybe he had misheard Eddie when he said noon? Maybe he just meant afternoon in general? That didn't seem right, though, Eddie and Stan were both all about punctuality. It wasn't like him to not have a specific time set up.

Against his will Richie found himself conjuring up all sorts of possible scenarios. It had only been three short days since they defeated that damned clown...could It have come back for revenge? It wouldn't exactly fit the pattern but God, Richie couldn't think of any reason that Eddie wouldn't show up unless his mom confined him to the

house again. After Eddie's rebellion, however, she had loosened the leash by a couple inches, probably afraid of him refusing to take any of his pills all together. He mainly carried them around now to please her, but he couldn't seem to kick the inhaler.

After the events with It happened, Richie had pulled Eddie aside to verify that he was really okay and didn't secret hate them for the injury he obtained in the Neibolt house. Of course he played it off like it was no big deal, but Richie was absolutely terrified that Eddie would stop hanging out with them, with *him*. Eddie had just rolled his eyes and lightly punched Richie in the shoulder. "You dumbass, you're not getting rid of me that easily." But was he telling the truth? Or just trying to avoid openly telling Richie that he secretly hated him?

"Pssht. I don't care if he hates me, it's not that big a deal." He spoke aloud, the Voice he chose a loud cocky stereotypical Valley Girl accent. "I've got puh-lenty of other friends."

The Voice felt flat, even to his ears. God, he couldn't even fool himself.

Truth was, he hadn't been able to get the asthmatic boy out of his head since Neibolt, since he and Bill came around the corner and found It towering over Eddie, a gloved hand resting on his face in a parody of a calming gesture, teeth extended and drool dripping onto the dirt floor. Eddie had been trembling, eyes closed and cradling his injured arm, but he hadn't cried. God, he had been so *brave*. Even after Bev stabbed that pasty son of a bitch through the head, and was approaching the group of them with murder in his eyes, he didn't cry. Sure, he screamed, but to be fair it was a fucking *shape shifting demon clown* that had just broken his arm. Richie hadn't even thought about what he was doing, feeling Bev shaking as she clung to the back of his shirt, his hands reaching out to cradle Eddie's face and turn it away from Pennywise. He spoke quickly and frantically, looking into terrified brown eyes.

"Don't look, Eddie! Just look at me, don't look at It!"

Eddie had stuttered enough to give Bill a run for his money, and then in an instant, Pennywise was gone, slinking away into the well with

nothing but slash marks on Ben's stomach and Eddie's broken arm to show It had ever been there at all.

Richie hadn't told anyone that the one thing that had lured him away from Bill and into the clown room was Eddie. That was weird, wasn't it? Boys shouldn't drop everything to run after another *boy*. As his mother often said during her drunken tirades, that was *queer*, that was something some kind of homo would do, wasn't it? And Richie knew he was no homo. He loved the ladies, Bev was hot, and whenever a sexy woman made an appearance in one of the movies at the Aladdin, he whooped and hollered in appreciation along with all the rest of the guys.

But....*Eddie*.

There was just something about him, something that made Richie's heart speed up whenever the shorter boy rolled his eyes and shot a comeback right back at him. He was too easy to tease as well, he got all kinds of flustered and red whenever Richie Got Off A Good One. It was positively adorable.

O-Or not! Not! Not adorable at all! It wasn't! That was weird, for him to think his male best friend was adorable! He must have inhaled too many sewage fumes when he was stomping around in all that gray water, right? Or else maybe he was just Eddiesexual.

Still, putting that aside with a small scowl, it didn't change the fact that Eddie was late and he was *never* late. He slipped onto his bike, dinged and scraped from years of heavy use, and pedaled over to the pharmacy as if maybe Eddie was just picking up his prescription...for three hours. The place was deserted, although Mr. Keene gave him a friendly wave of greeting that Richie returned halfheartedly, before dejectedly heading towards his own home. Maybe he had gotten the meeting place confused...?

He blinked in surprise as he spotted something lying in the middle of the alleyway between the pharmacy and the small grocery store that Mike often brought deliveries to.

He inched closer, looking around suspiciously for any sign of that fucking clown. If he even heard an ice cream truck go by with a

creepy jingle he was so out of there.

What he found instead was even more frightening.

It was Eddie's bike, crumpled, twisted, and bent in odd places, tossed aside like so much garbage. Its owner was nowhere in sight.

What made his blood boil, however, was the word hastily carved into the black metal of the bike's frame, most likely with a knife.

FAGGOT

Richie spun his own bike around and pedaled as fast as he could to Bill's house. This wasn't the clown, but it had the potential to be even worse.

"Ruh-Richie, s-suh-slow down-! Whuh-what h-happened?!" Bill demanded, taking in Richie's disheveled appearance and the utter panic in the other boy's eyes as he forced himself to stop babbling frantically and talk sense.

"I-I think Bowers' gang did something really fucking bad to Eds! He said he was going to meet me at the pharmacy at noon and it's been like three fucking hours and I found his bike in the alley next to the store, and it looks like it's been run over-!"

Bill's eyes widened and he shook Richie once to try and get him to listen. "Richie, w-we nuh-need t-to call th-the oth-hers!" If this was Bowers' gang, Eddie could be in serious trouble. After Mike had been attacked by Henry in the basement of the well house, he had knocked the older boy back and over the side. Richie felt the wind rush past as Henry whizzed by, kicking and screaming. Once they had beaten It and gotten out alive, they told the police they were playing hide and seek, Henry followed them, and he had accidentally fallen in. Paramedics pulled him out from the bottom of the cistern, both of his legs shattered and one arm broken, his hair completely white and raving about a clown. They chalked it up to a nervous breakdown right up until he confessed to all the murders of the kids in the neighborhood. He was in the hospital now but the town was out for blood. He couldn't get the death penalty as a minor but he was facing

a life sentence in a mental institution.

Bowers' gang had not taken this news well. It got even worse when they found out the Losers had been at the scene. Belch Huggins had been relentless in pursuing Mike during his deliveries, forcing him to switch up his route daily to avoid him. Victor Criss had spotted Bill, Ben, and Beverly walking together one day and had shot stones at them with his slingshot until they were out of view. Moose and a few of the 'sometimes' gang, the ones who weren't glued to Henry's side the way Victor and Belch were, had merely shot wicked looks at Stan, Richie, and Eddie when they had been biking home from a day at the park. So far nothing had come of Henry's gang's threats...until now.

Richie was freaking out, on the verge of panic. "Bill, what if they fucking killed him or something? They carved the word 'faggot' into his bike and it looks like Belch ran it over! What if Eddie was *on* his bike? Oh shit oh God oh *fuck*-"

Bill looked apologetic as he smacked Richie across the face.

"Ouch! What the fuck, Bill!?"

"Guh-g-get it together, T-Tozier! We have t-tuh-to, f-for E-Eddie's sake! I-I'll c-call everyone else, m-maybe huh-he's at S-Stan's or suh-something?"

Richie nodded sharply, one hand rubbing his sore cheek. "Right, that...yeah. That makes sense. M-Maybe he's fine? Maybe they took his bike but he's totally fine, just pissed off somewhere?"

Bill didn't say anything, one hand holding the receiver up to his ear while the other one swiftly dialed the numbers he knew by heart. First Beverly, then Mike, then Ben, and lastly Stan.

They would find Eddie.

It would be okay.

Once they had all been filled in, Stan spoke up. "His mom called me like, a half hour ago, I-I thought he might be with Richie so I covered for him."

Bev nodded once. "At least now we have some extra time to find him."

Ben hummed in thought, glancing around as if expecting Victor Criss to come after them again. "We should check around town. You know, the places that he usually hangs out."

Mike grimaced. "But he's always with one of us, I hardly ever see him anywhere alone except the pharmacy."

Richie bit his lip but couldn't seem to stop himself from speaking up. "Wh...what if it was Pennywise, somehow?"

All of them flinched visibly, except for Bill.

"It's d-dead. It isn't cuh-coming back."

That fluttery panicked feeling *was* coming back, that's for sure. "But what if It does? What if we didn't actually kill It and Pennywise has Eddie stashed in the fucking sewer somewhere?!" He felt frantic, and a small wave of frustration that they weren't doing anything but talking!

Bill didn't answer and turned back to the others. "Ruh-Richie already chuh-checked the fuh-f-pharmacy. Whuh-What ab-bout the p-park?"

Mike shook his head. "I had just picked up some supplies for my granddad at the feed store next to the park and I didn't see him there. I would have noticed, I'm always having to look out for Belch these days."

Bev hummed in thought. "What about the library? He goes in there sometimes."

Ben shook his head. "Nope, I had just gotten back from there when you called, Bill. He wasn't there."

Stan bit his lip, trying not to look worried now. He had thought maybe they just hadn't run into Eddie by chance, but the hypochondriac really didn't go anywhere by himself. In fact, he was usually attached to Richie at the hip.

The trashmouth in question frowned, going over every clue in his mind, his frustration growing. This wasn't helping! They were just talking around in circles, and Eddie could be out there somewhere hurt, scared, maybe even dying, and to add insult to injury it was probably somewhere dirty-

...son of a bitch.

"Guys...guys! The well house! Neibolt Street! If Bowers' shitty little gang grabbed Eddie, then I bet they took him to the well house! That's where Henry was found, they probably wanted to scare him!" And oh God, if that was the case they needed to *hurry*, Richie didn't even want to think about how horrific it would be to end up back there knowing what lurked just underneath the ground.

Bill's eyes widened in realization. "Ruh-Richie is r-right! W-we have to guh-go now!"

Everyone nodded, quickly scrambling onto their bikes and pedaling as fast as they could to the last place they wanted to ever go back to.

The Losers pulled up to the house and dismounted quickly. Even Stan leaned his bike up against the fence instead of wasting time with the kickstand.

Richie froze as a familiar spot of color caught his attention. Tossed haphazardly amongst the dying sunflowers were four empty medicine bottles, along with dozens of colorful pills that had been scattered amongst the dirt and weeds.

"Guys..!" Beverly hissed, boldly walking right up to the porch and crouching down, holding up several broken shards of red and white plastic. It was Eddie's inhaler, and it had clearly been stomped to pieces.

Richie's face twisted in rage. "Those fucking *assholes*! Eddie never did anything to any of them! Fucking cowards!"

Stan looked nervous about entering the house again, blinking in surprise as Bill laid his hand on his shoulder and squeezed.

"J-Juh-Just a qwuh-quick peek, Stan, I puh-promise."

Stan's face went red and he shook away his embarrassment to nod. "Yeah....I can handle it. For Eddie."

Richie took a deep breath and threw open the door.

Someone had been here recently, and there were clear signs of a struggle. The dusty vase had been knocked off the top of the piano and shattered, and there were several footprints in the dust. Big footprints. At least four different pairs. Long grooves, as if someone had been dragged.

Richie's anger towards Bowers' gang only intensified, and for a moment he found himself wishing it had stuck around long enough to take care of the whole gang instead of just Patrick.

Bill grit his teeth and looked over at the others, a sober expression on his face. The tracks led to the stairs to the basement, where the smaller pair of footprints were mysteriously absent. He was beginning to suspect what exactly the older boys had done to Eddie and it wasn't good, not by a long shot.

"What if...what if they went too far? Guys, what if they actually killed him?" Ben breathed in horror, face paling considerably at the possibility. Nobody went into this house anymore, and they knew all too well that the adults in Derry tended to overlook or outright ignore the disappearances in the town. Even though the 'killer' had been caught, nobody but Sonia Kaspbrak would likely kick up a fuss if Eddie vanished too.

Richie whirled around, face livid. "Don't even say that, Haystack! Eds is fine, he's *fine*, and once we find where he's at, we'll take him home and then I'm going after those pricks one by one with that metal baseball bat! See if they can take a hit to the face as well as the goddamn clown did!"

Bev laid a hand on his arm. "Richie..."

He spun to face her, eyes narrowed behind his glasses as if scared she would agree with Ben. "What?!"

She pursed her lips, green eyes giving him a knowing look. "It'll be okay. We'll handle this together. No matter what we find downstairs, we're still the Loser's Club."

He stared her down for a minute before giving a small nod.

Mike reached into his back pocket and pulled out his pocket knife, worn from frequent use on the farm, and passed it up to Richie. "Here, just in case they're still down there."

Richie took it and nodded. If they had done the unthinkable...if they had murdered Eddie down here...he had no problem avenging the smaller boy, no matter what it meant for him later. Even if it meant the rubber room right next to Henry Bowers. For Eddie, it was worth it.

They went downstairs and found the room empty, save for some handprints around the mouth of the well.

Richie froze and didn't step closer, the realization of what Belch and the others had done hitting him all at once.

"Th...they threw him down the well..." Richie choked out, eyes stinging with hot tears of disbelief. The pocket knife slipped from his hand and hit the dirt floor with a soft 'thud'. How could Bowers' gang do something so cruel? Eddie was the most harmless of all of them, except for maybe Ben. If anyone deserved to be beat up and thrown down that damned well, it was probably Richie himself!

"Th-the rope is still hanging down, maybe he caught himself-!?" Richie asked desperately, turning to the other Losers as if hoping one of them would agree with him.

Bill grimaced and looked at the other boy with intense sadness in his eyes. "....Nuh-not w-with huh-h-huh-his a-arm buh-buh-brok-ken..."

His stutter had only been this heavy at Georgie's funeral.

Richie's heart plummeted to somewhere around his stomach. This couldn't be happening, damn it, he had just seen Eddie the day previously, he had teased and poked and messed with him just as much as usual, he hadn't even said anything nice when he left, just

smirked and flipped him the bird while joking that he had to hurry home to Eddie's house to take care of his mom. The last thing Eddie had said before he was gone over the hill was, "Beep beep, Richie, you fuckhead!", a wry smirk on his lips. Was that seriously the last thing he would ever hear his Eddie Spaghetti say? He had never even told him how much his friendship meant to him, not to mention that he had...awkward unexplored feelings for the asthmatic boy.

In Richie's head he heard his mom drunkenly screech, "*Faggot homo queer!*", but it seemed so unimportant now. He would put up with every stupid slur or insult in the book if it meant he could have a chance to confess to Eddie, to tell him he liked him in a totally non platonic way.

"Eds? Hey, Spaghetti Man, where are you!?" Richie called, as if hoping Eddie would appear out of a different room or something, as if by magic.

Silence.

Bev let out a small sob and Ben bit his lip in grief, reaching out to cautiously pull her into a hug. She clung to him and wept. Bill's eyes filled with angry tears, gritting his teeth and turning away. Mike let out a soft curse, covering his eyes with one large hand as if to hide his anguish. Stan looked utterly heartbroken, his eyes glassy and distant as he remembered what his father had said only last week.

I think Eddie will do just fine.

He'll make sure Eddie doesn't get forgotten about.

Stanley won't let anything bad happen to him.

He had been so proud that night, proud that he was a good friend.

Some friend he turned out to be.

Richie stared at the well for a moment, before walking towards it and hiking his leg over the side, reaching out one hand to grab the rope. The reaction was immediate.

"Ruh-Richie!"

"What the fuck are you-"

"Get back, Richie, for real!"

He turned and shot them all a glare, wiping hot tears away angrily with the back of one hand. "We can't...can't just fucking leave him down there! Not after Pennywise! H-He hates dirt, you guys, he wouldn't want...wouldn't...!"

Mike gave a slow nod of understanding, his face pained. "...Richie's right, you guys. Eddie deserves better."

Stan looked like he was going to be sick but he nodded anyways. "I...I don't want him to be left down there to...to rot."

Beverly gave a sharp intake of breath while Ben murmured a soft agreement and together they all stepped forwards to help lower Richie down.

"Here, wait, Rich, I...I've got a flashlight." Ben mumbled, pulling a small booklight from his pocket and handing it to him. Richie accepted it numbly and held it in his teeth, slowly beginning to slide down the rope. He made it about halfway down, past the hole they had stopped in before, pointedly not looking in for fear a fucking clown would be peeking out of it.

A soft moan drifted out of the well, echoing horribly, and Richie froze in terror.

'Oh fuck I was right It's still alive and It's going to kill me too-!' Richie thought deliriously, before thinking that if he got to see Eddie again that might not be so bad. He would at least look his death in the face.

Richie looked down.

The flashlight slipped from his teeth.

Illuminated briefly as the light bounced from one wall with a 'tink', was Eddie Kaspbrak, dangling from the hook at the end of the rope. That rusty old hook had somehow, miraculously caught on the back strap of that fucking amazing, wonderful, spectacular *fanny pack*.

Richie gave a choked out noise of relief, surprise, and excitement that sounded a little like a dying animal, and that was when the flashlight nailed Eddie in the head.

"Ow, shit, what the actual fuck was that-!" Eddie moaned in pain, his bad arm reaching up to rub at his head, before scared brown eyes caught sight of Richie. He gasped, face lighting up in terrified relief, the faintest reflection of dried tear tracks in his cheeks. "R-Richie-! Y-you c-came-! You came!"

Richie couldn't help it.

"Hell yeah I did, all over your mom's face since you were too busy getting beat up to take it instead."

Eddie just grinned and flipped him off, the star struck smile never leaving his face. "Eat shit, Richie."

"Only if it's yours." He quipped triumphantly in a dramatic Voice, eyebrows waggling even as he began to cry softly again, this time out of relief. Eddie was okay, *he was okay-!* "What say we getcha outta here? If you don't come home on time your mom will be too depressed to sleep with me."

"You are so disgusting oh my God." Eddie deadpanned, but the expression on his face was of immense happiness.

Richie realized in that exact moment he would do anything to keep Eddie looking that content all the time. But he would keep that secret close, now was a bad time, Eddie was probably about two seconds away from a serious freak out, and judging by the wheeze in his voice, he could use an inhaler. Now wasn't the time to discuss the fact that Richie wasn't exactly as straight as he once thought.

Too bad his trashmouth didn't get the memo.

"Oh, and by the way, I'm pretty sure you almost dying turned me gay. Thanks a lot. Women everywhere are going to be so mad at you. I guess you can make up for ruining pussy for me forever by going out with me."

Eddie's eyes grew wide, and as his vision adjusted to the dark Richie

could tell the smaller boy had a black eye. "A-Are you seriously coming out to me right now? Like, this was actually the best time you could think of, me hanging halfway in the sewer? How romantic. You total asshole." Eddie scoffed, but his cheeks were bright red and he looked inexplicably happy. "Fine, whatever, you pervert. Just...can you get me out, now? I fucking hate this well."

Richie began to lower himself down the rope using strength he didn't know he had, energy seeming to come as if from nowhere as he raised his voice loud enough to project upwards. "Guys, guys! Pull the rope up!" He continued to inch his way down, his free hand grabbing a fistful of the back of Eddie's stupid polo shirt. There was no way in hell he was risking dropping Eddie for real, especially now that his heart was celebrating Eddie liking him back by singing some badass classic rock ballads.

Gradually, the crank at the top began to turn, and Eddie and Richie slowly floated up out of the sewers.

"Richie, d-did you find him?" Stan's voice was thick with tears as it drifted down the well, echoing lightly.

"You bet your pasty Jewish ass I did." Richie called back up, his face lit up with glee. Eddie was okay, so everything else would be, too.

His head poked out of the top of the well and he could see Mike, Ben, and Bill heaving and turning the crank with all of their strength. Beverly spotted Eddie first, gasping deliriously and lunging for the edge.

"Oh my God, Eddie! Y-you're alive! You're all right!"

He reached out and she clung to his forearms, using a surprising amount of strength for her size to help heave him over the side, the hook still caught on his fanny pack. Stan's head shot up in disbelief and Bill's resounding whoop of victory echoed through the Neibolt House. Mike and Ben quickly helped Richie climb out of the well, and then all seven of the Losers were in a heap on the floor, clinging to Eddie like he was going to disappear if they let him go.

Eddie let himself slowly relax, his tongue coming out to cautiously

poke at his split lip. "Aw, man, I'm totally fucked when I get home, aren't I...?"

Richie smirked, dragging the shorter boy closer and giving him a noogie. "I mean, I can think of a lot more romantic places than your house, but I suppose it's only fair that as the bottom you get to choose."

Eddie went bright red and punched Richie in the side, cackling wickedly as he went down with a dramatic screech. "Who the fuck says *I'm* the bottom, Tozier?"

At these words, Beverly and Bill shared a knowing look, Bev smirking as she ruffled Eddie's hair. "Boys, boys, please. Just make sure you wear protection."

Mike and Ben burst into chuckles at this, Richie scoffing and pressing a swift smooch to Eddie's cheek. "What do I need to do that for? He's already caught my herpes now."

Eddie wiped at his face with mock disgust, but he couldn't hide his blush or pleased expression. "You asswipe, I hope your dick falls off."

Richie snorted. "Well, then what good would I be to you then?"

Stan groaned loudly, burying his face in his hands. "Oh God I thought they acted like boyfriends before. This is like a whole new level now! Is it too late for me to kill myself?"

Bill reached out and flicked him sharply on the nose. "D-Don't even tuh-think about it, y-you're not getting aw-away f-from tuh-this that easily. If we hah-have to s-suffer through their huh-honeymoon period s-so do you."

Richie made kissy faces at them both. "Oh, don't worry, Stan the Man, if you're jealous all you gotta do is ask. There's plenty of me to go around."

Eddie huffed and crossed his arms, squirming and trying to get to his feet. "You're such a whore, Richie." Despite his teasing, Richie quickly grabbed his good hand to help tug Eddie into a standing position, his hand lingering over Eddie's for perhaps a moment too long.

Richie grinned as they began the walk up the stairs, out of the house, and into the sun. "You love me anyways."

Eddie abruptly went bright red, ignoring the grins from the rest of the Loser's Club. "So what if I do? Sh-shut up about it, Trashmouth!"

Richie couldn't keep the smile off his face, glancing over at the rest of their friends. The ones who had fought a demon clown to save not just one of their own, but the whole town. The ones who had fearlessly charged right back into the belly of the beast to find Eddie. The ones that didn't care that maybe Richie and Eddie weren't completely straight after all.

He just had one more thing to add.

"Oh, and fun fact. We're all gonna wear matching fanny packs from now on. Club rules. Aw, don't look so upset Stanny Boy, I bet they have one with birds on it for ya. It'll be *faaaaabulous*, dahling."

"Oh, for fuck's sake. Beep beep, Richie!"

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading! I'm considering writing another chapter going into more detail of what exactly went down from Eddie's POV but we'll see what shakes loose. ;) Have a spectacular day~!